

Assemblies - Mental Health – myfishbites.com

Mental Health

Many people will suffer with mental health issues. These can range from anxieties and worries about exams through to much more serious conditions. We should be open and talk about mental health issues without anyone saying anything bad about us. We all have problems in life in different ways and that is OK. The important thing is to keep talking, to know that there are people who care about you. You need to know that you are incredibly precious, unique and valuable. You are important and really matter! Life is about supporting each other, helping, caring, showing compassion, being loved and loving others in a healthy way.

[Childline](#) has these facts about what mental health is: (link checked January 2019)

- how you feel about yourself
- how happy you are
- how much you believe you can overcome challenges in your life
- whether you feel able to interact with other people.

It's when these feelings dominate you, affect your life negatively or you feel like there is no escape that they can begin to be a problem for people.

Fake World and Real Problems!

It is important to know that we live in a bit of a fake world. The movies we watch, the music we listen to, the online magazines and perfect images we may see are usually made up and not real. They are fake. It's good to know this because we sometimes want to be like the person we see on TV or at a gig. But what we see often hides the troubles, problems, struggles, addictions, bad behaviour that is behind the scenes. We are all human and no one is perfect. If we know that then we know it's OK to have struggles!

What Mental Health issues are there?

You could ask people to shout out ideas where appropriate, or here are the suggestions from Childline of things that mental health can include:

- Anorexia and bulimia
- Anxiety and panic attacks

- ADHD
- Bipolar disorder
- Depression
- OCD (Obsessive Compulsive Disorder)
- PTSD (Post-traumatic Stress Disorder) caused by things like loss or attack etc
- Schizophrenia

Mental Health Facts

Facts from Mind UK – <http://bit.ly/2wmCC4S> (link checked January 2019)

(Click here for a more detailed PDF written in 2016 from Mind UK – <http://bit.ly/2ac8t0T>) – (link checked January 2019)

1 in 4 people in the UK suffer with a mental health problem each year. 1 in 6 people in England suffer with a weekly mental health problem (anxiety and depression). The numbers of people suffering with mental health issues doesn't appear to be increasing but people do seem to be finding it more and more difficult to cope – with things like suicide and self-harm increasing.

People living in private housing in England have also been surveyed about self-harm and suicide. These figures don't include people in hospitals, prisons, sheltered housing or homeless people, so the real figures will likely be higher.

Suicidal Thoughts – 20.6 in 100 people

Suicide Attempts – 6.7 in 100 people

Self-harm – 7.3 in 100 people

In addition, Childline said that numbers of young people and children contacting them about feeling lonely, often because parents and carers are often too busy to talk to their children or properly listen to them. Many felt they were invisible, ugly or unpopular – with social media only making things worse.

Video

Chris Kirkland, once England goalkeeper talks about some of his mental health struggles.

BBC Link (checked January 2019) – <http://www.bbc.co.uk/sport/football/41599714>

Direct Link of Chris Kirkland interview to the PFA – <https://youtu.be/TXc36KZHFds> (checked January 2019)

How can I cope with mental health issues?

This partly depends on what the issue is and who you are as a person as different things help different people. But some general points to help are:

- Talk to someone you trust or to call someone like Childline. You don't have to cope alone.
- If there has been grief or anything traumatic happen, give it time and remember that there's no set time to have to get something sorted out. Time can be a great healer.
- If you're suffering with low confidence, you can take small steps: change how you think about yourself or what you say about yourself; go and help someone else in need; do exercise and get active as this helps release endorphins which make you feel better; try to eat more healthy food.
- Write down how you're feeling and write down positive things about yourself and your day. Try not to speak out or focus on negative things.
- If you're feeling like self-harming, is there something else you can do that may be a better way of coping like music, phoning a friend, hitting something that won't hurt, painting your nails instead of hurting yourself.
- If you're feeling stressed, can you do something to let out the stress that's positive – like exercise, getting away from the situation until you feel more clear, breathing slowly, thinking about something positive or enjoyable, having a shower or bath.
- If you're feeling suicidal, try to avoid things like drugs and alcohol. Instead, do something you like, do sport, find what makes you feel good about yourself that's positive and do that. Or you can get around some good people, talk to someone, watch a favourite film, have a diary to write or draw in, write poems or raps or songs about how you're feeling.
- Get out into the natural environment or do some creative things like music, art, make something.
- You can pray or meditate. For example you can ask God to help you. Or you can read the Bible or just read out some of the Bible verses that may help as there is lots about every situation in life.
- Get to the Childline channel and watch some of their helpful videos!

Childline Video - 'Coming Out About Mental Health'

Direct Link – <https://youtu.be/dGOiLzhBhng> (link checked January 2019)

How can I help someone I know with mental health issues?

- If a friend is being bullied, let someone know that you trust. Don't ignore it.
- If someone is talking about taking their life, you need to tell someone.
- Listen to your friend if they want to talk. Or just be there for them and do nice things.
- Don't be judgmental towards your friend. We all go through tough times. Just be there.
- If there is abuse going on, it may be right to tell someone about this. Or talk to Childline.
- If there has been a death, don't avoid your friend. Keep on being there for them. Don't avoid talking about it if they want to talk. Give them practical support (food, going out for the day, do stuff they like).
- If you are a Christian, you can pray for your friend – that God would help them and show them how valuable they are.
- Involve them in doing something good for someone else in the community.

These are just suggestions – maybe you have some other ideas to throw into the mix!

God Says!

As a Christian, I believe that God is very real and have seen God change people around and turn bad situations into good situations. I have seen people struggling with depression, suicide, anxiety, violence and other issues. All of them have been changed by God (some dramatically) to be given a hope and a future by God. This is because God is for you and not against you, as some people would try to make you believe. God is a good God. There is lots of bad in the world but it's not God causing it – it's just this messed up world. But God can make things right and even when things don't work out perfectly, he is right there with you and for you.

Stephen Fry once said that he doesn't believe in a God who does evil. But Christians also don't believe in this god. Instead, they believe in God who wants to bring light in darkness and good from bad situations.

As a Christian I believe God made us and knows us best. Anyone can ask him for help – even if you don't believe in God, you may have tried everything else. So inside yourself you can just say "God, show me your real and help me." That's it. What's not to like...

Some Helpful Links

Childline – <https://childline.org.uk>

Mind UK – <https://www.mind.org.uk>

At A Loss – <http://www.ataloss.org>

Care For The Family – <http://www.careforthefamily.org.uk>

(links checked January 2019)